

Myths & Facts about Rape & Sexual Assault

MYTH: Rape is a crime of passion.

FACT: Rape is a crime of violence, control, & power.

MYTH: "It can't happen to me"...Rape is an isolated, infrequent event that only happens to certain kinds of people such as attractive young women and/or women who are promiscuous.

FACT: Anyone can be sexually assaulted. Victims can include infants to people in their nineties, people with disabilities, people of color, lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgendered, and people from every racial, ethnic, religious, & socio-economic background.

MYTH: "She asked for it." A rape is provoked by that person's behavior: being drunk, wearing tight clothing, staying out late...

FACT: No one asks to be sexually assaulted, nor does anyone's behavior justify the crime. The offender, not the survivor, is always responsible for the crime.

MYTH: Most offenders are African-American males.

FACT: Over 90% of sexual assaults occur between people of the same ethnic background.

MYTH: Men can defend themselves if being sexually assaulted.

FACT: Men are often attacked by gangs, assaulted with weapons, and taken by surprise. Drugs and alcohol are sometimes used. Physical strength is often not a factor of protection in sexual assaults and is often not a trait of the perpetrator. The perpetrator has likely planned the rape. The victim doesn't know about a rape ahead of time and is usually shocked.

MYTH: "Someone could stop a rape if they wanted to."

FACT: Fear, threats, and physical brutality can immobilize anyone.

MYTH: Women secretly want to be raped.

FACT: Women do not want to be victims of violent humiliating assaults. A fantasy about aggressive sex is not asking to be raped.